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Mind's Journey

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MIND'S JOURNEY

I went out
and down
Through darkness soft, softer, softer...,
And wandered out upon
A little plain — soft, then softer.
And moving through there,
Only were my friends. A schoolbook.
A half a leaf. A pebble.
“Not yet”, I thought,
“Not yet,”
And sank down through the plain.
Then I went down
Through darkness soft, softer, softer...,
Darkness, darker, darker...,
Till at last it was so dark
That I could see.

Now!
Now there was a path
Not of rock,
Not of earth,
A wandering ragged cavern,
Finally,
That friends will never wander to;
Where leaves won't grow;
(Their ignorance is pitied).

Fly down the cave;
Faster, faster, gather speed;
The steps of truth are straight before me.
I'm on them,
Each one brother to the next;
Each one follows only from the fore,

Connected with a slim, slim spar;
And reaching on and up
Through the softened darkness.
Broad the steps
At first;
With flowing speed, each to the higher
Unerringly flings me.
Flings me.
Flings me, flings me.
Straight at the glow,
The atomless nonburning piercing glow,
Sharp but softly permeating all
The darkness.
Faint glimmerings are reaching me,
Dragging me
Into an even swifter race.
Swiftly. Oh, so swiftly!
Higher, tiny slanted steps.
So hard! So hard!
.....Somehow I missed
A step.

Oh, I've slipped so many,
Many times.
Once I strained and ran and worked;
I felt some glory slipping toward me.
That glow — I almost saw it clear
Before I saw there was no step —
No final step to bridge
The incredible void,
No final step to burn the veil.
It's so easy to get started
On a chain of steps
Like this:
They steal out
From almost any thought
Or reverie

And yet so hard,
So very hard to finish.

The cavern swells
Into a flashing, glinting, flickering room,
all mirror-lined.
Slip in —
We'll speed through, dance, and dodge,
And catch that grining puppet.
Catch him, hold him,
Peer into him.
Suck out his very thought;
Touch and stroke his very clay.
Ah, dancel! He mocks me, dancing too,
A sour leer upon his head,
He knows he's slipped away before.
And now a crablike leap — we're closer;
And he's closer too
And doesn't know.
Divert his eyes (glittering eyes)
Beyond us.
Now glide a step, another;
Whirl a little, whirl some more,
Deceive him.
He's laughing, thinks he's dancing with me.
Now step...and leap...then
Whirl and seize.....!!
Oh, damn — again!
I touch his hot and writhing hand,
Catch an acrid smell,
Hear a muffled sobbing struggle;
But oh! that glass an atom thick
Dims his face;
Blots his head, blots his Self
Into a hazy orb.

I'll wander up again
Now,

Through the soft, soft darkness;
Slip out into the gray,
Slip out into the light
And see a friend and feel a pebble.
The flooding light is blinding.

I never can step far enough.
I never can come close enough.

Larry Syndergaard, Ag. Sr.



The Barn

THEY'RE tearing down the old barn today, faded board by rusty nail, year by year by memory. The ghosts of the lumbering, slow-moving work-horses snort and stamp fringed sledge hammers in protest. The dusty afternoon sunshine creates angles where slick bay hides years ago diffused the beams into little prisms glittering like fireflies.

In winter mornings, the stable side of the barn was a hoarfrost land of silvered straw. And in each stall was a black or bay chimney breathing frozen smoke through crystal noses.

We would get up early on a Saturday during corn-picking time and run to the barn through a morning that was still a night with stars and a faint-hearted moon. The yellow kerosene-lantern light defied the darkness for a few feet outside the barn windows, then the snow and the night stopped it.

Everything was lovely inside the barn. A horse with a star on his forehead stood by the door and nickered when we came in. We could hear Daddy and Grandpa farther down the line of stalls grunting and swearing softly to the horses.